

Please print!

Name: _____ Area code/phone #: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

1. In which county do you hunt deer the most? _____

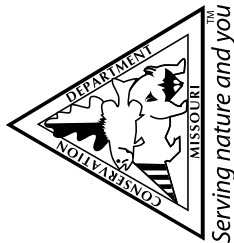
2. Do you want the 4-point antler restriction in this county? ☐ yes ☐ no

3. Do you support the proposed season timing changes? ☐ yes ☐ no

Please use the back of this card for additional comments.

Mail to:
Missouri Department of Conservation
Deer Management Considerations
1110 S. College Ave.
Columbia, MO 65201

Comments also may be made by going online at mdc.mo.gov/16184



12/07

If implemented, these changes would not go into effect until 2009 to give hunters enough advance notice to set vacations.

- Move the antlerless portion of the firearms deer season into October, so antlerless deer could be taken before the November portion
- Set the opening of the November portion on the weekend before Thanksgiving
- Move the muzzleloader portion to late December

All deer hunting groups could benefit:

- Firearms hunters would still get to hunt the rut and would have more time to hunt over the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Firearms hunters would continue to have separate antlerless deer hunting opportunities.
- Archers would get an additional week of mid-November hunting.
- Muzzleloader hunters would have a better hunting opportunity because deer would have time to "settle down" after the November portion.

Management advantages:

- Improve our ability to manage deer numbers and allow more bucks to reach older age classes
- Allow dominate males more opportunities to breed before large numbers of bucks are harvested

Action: Please let us know if you support changing the season timing as proposed.



Your opinion counts!

Deer management experts will be holding 16 meetings throughout the state to gather public input on these deer management issues. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you can view the presentation and provide your comments online at: mdc.mo.gov/16184.

All meetings are from **7 to 9 p.m.**

- **Jan. 8,** Bass Pro Shops, White River Room, 1935 Campbell Ave., Springfield
- **Jan. 9,** Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center, 201 W. Riviera Road, Joplin
- **Jan. 10,** Missouri Western State University, Potter Theater, 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph
- **Jan. 11,** Chillicothe High School, Gary Dickinson Performing Arts Center, 2801 Hornet Road, Chillicothe
- **Jan. 14,** Days Inn, Highway 63 South, Kirksville
- **Jan. 15,** Quality Inn, 120 Lindsey Drive, Hannibal
- **Jan. 17,** Three Rivers Community College, Tennin Center Aud., 2080 Three Rivers Blvd., Poplar Bluff
- **Jan. 22,** East Central Community College, 1964 Prairie Dell Road, Union
- **Jan. 23,** Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood
- **Jan. 24,** Perryville Park Center Theatre, 800 City Park Drive, Perryville
- **Jan. 28,** Waynesville Middle School, Parker Fine Arts Building, 1001 Historic 66 West, Waynesville
- **Feb. 4,** Marshall High School Little Theater, 805 S. Miami Ave., Marshall
- **Feb. 5,** Burr Oak Woods Nature Center, 1401 N.W. Park Road, Blue Springs
- **Feb. 6,** State Fair Community College, 2503 W. 16th St., Sedalia
- **Feb. 7,** St. George Catholic Church Basement, 611 E. Main, Linn
- **Feb. 11,** West Plains Civic Center, 110 St. Louis St., West Plains

Please give us your input by filling out the attached form or going online, and thank you for your support of Missouri deer management.

Your opinion counts!

White-tailed Deer Management Considerations for 2008 and 2009



Missouri Department of Conservation

Hunters are key to deer management

Hunters are Missouri's most effective and reliable means of managing deer numbers. However, because the average age of deer hunters in Missouri is slowly increasing, it is predicted that older hunters will quit deer hunting at a higher rate than new hunters are recruited.

Efforts to recruit young hunters with youth seasons and special hunts are paying dividends, but it is unlikely to prevent the predicted decline. This, unfortunately, does not bode well for our ability to control deer numbers because deer population management in rural Missouri is dependent on harvest during the hunting seasons.

At the same time, deer hunter interests are changing. Hunters are becoming more selective, and surveys show that hunters would like to see more bucks in older age classes.

The future of deer management

Missouri deer hunters will enjoy excellent deer hunting in the future, but we must continue to explore better ways to manage deer in the best interest of Missourians. Our goal is to improve your deer hunting opportunity and experience.

The issues presented here are a result of biological research on deer and surveys of Missourians who value this resource. New deer management plans will only work if they have the support of hunters and landowners.

Your input, cooperation and support of regulation changes are essential. Please let us know your opinion on the two issues presented in this brochure by filling out and mailing the attached form or by going online at mdc.mo.gov/16184.

Issue 1: Keep or expand the 4-point antler restriction

After public meetings and hunter surveys, the Conservation Department in 2004 embarked on a pilot antler-point restriction. This new deer management strategy, which was implemented in 29 counties, required a buck to have a minimum of 4 points on at least one side to be legal.

The intent was to shift harvest pressure from bucks to does, thus producing a more balanced ratio of males to females and more bucks in older age classes. Balancing the ratio of bucks to does makes it easier to manage deer because fewer does need to be taken by hunters to affect deer population size. More bucks in older age classes also appeals to more hunters.

The 2007 deer season was the fourth and final year of the antler-point restriction pilot program. In 22 northern counties with high deer populations, doe harvest did not increase as it did in the central Missouri counties under the pilot study. Therefore, the antler restriction is not the *sole* solution to maintaining adequate doe harvest, but could play an important role as part of a management plan.

- Management advantages:**
- adult buck harvest increased by 20 percent, thus hunter support of the antler restriction was high (66 percent favored and 22 percent opposed)
 - doe harvest in central Missouri increased by an average of 13 percent

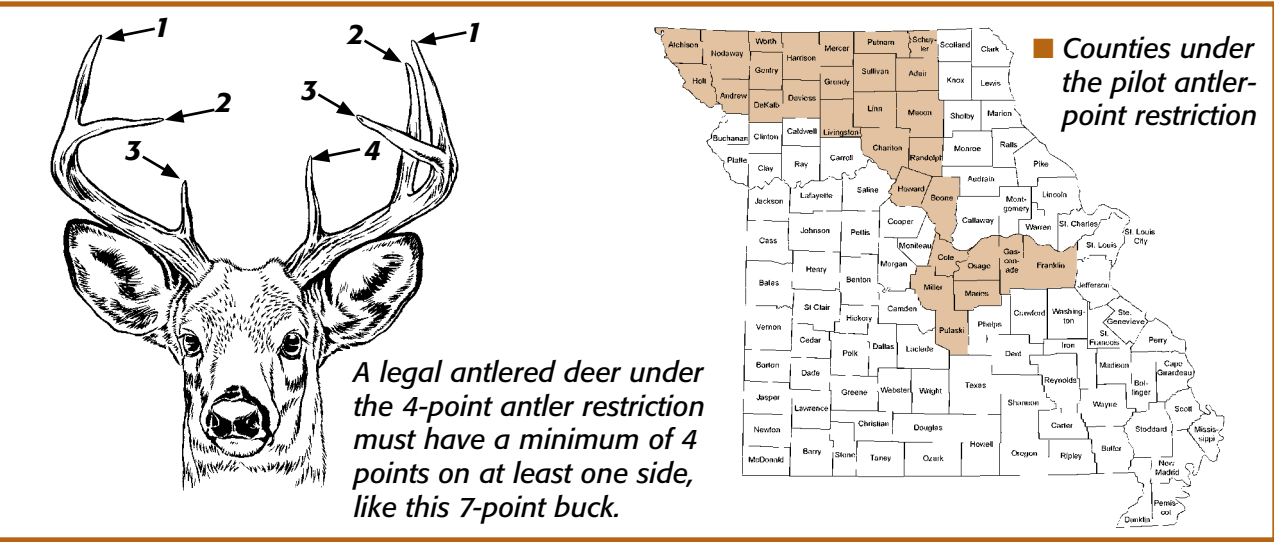
Action: Please let us know if you would like to hunt under the 4-point antler restriction in your county. Based on hunter response and biological results from the pilot study, we will decide whether to expand the antler restriction regulation to other counties or abandon it for the 2008 deer seasons.

Issue 2: Season timing

Missouri has two deer seasons: archery and firearms. The firearms season has five portions: urban counties, youth, November, muzzleloader and antlerless.

- In 2007, the seasons were:
- Archery—Sept. 15 through Jan. 15, excluding the November portion
 - Urban counties—Oct. 5-8
 - Youth—Oct. 27-28
 - November—Nov. 10-20
 - Muzzleloader—Nov. 23 through Dec. 2
 - Antlerless—Dec. 8-16

We believe, based on biological research, that we could help balance buck and doe ratios and produce more adult bucks if we change the season timing as outlined on the other side.



Thank you for your interest and help to wisely manage Missouri's white-tailed deer! Please tell us your opinions on the proposed management options by answering the questions on the other side. Write additional comments below: